

Rethinking Empire

DUMBARTON OAKS SYMPOSIUM, 21–22 APRIL 2017

SYMPOSIARCHS: DIMITER ANGELOV AND PAUL MAGDALINO

What do we mean when we call Byzantium an empire? A flurry of studies in recent years by historians of other hegemonic civilizations have situated empire and imperialism as historical phenomena across different periods and geographical areas. Until now, the involvement of Byzantinists in this reevaluation has been relatively marginal.

This symposium framed the issue of Byzantium's imperial identity by setting it within wider contexts

drawn by new research, as well as the approaches and methods profitably used by historians of other pre-modern and modern empires. The speakers tackled fundamental problems of definition and questioned Byzantium's territoriality and ethnic diversity, its culture and institutions of empire, and relations between core and periphery.

FRIDAY, 21 APRIL

Defining Empire

Dimiter Angelov (Harvard University)

Paul Magdalino (University of St Andrews)

THE ROMAN AND LATE ANTIQUE MATRIX

Learning from the Past, Learning from the Future:

Contemporary Approaches to the Earlier Roman Empire

Emma Dench (Harvard University)

From Moving Center to Centralization:

The Foundations of Byzantine Imperial Government

Sylvain Destephen (University of Paris)

TERRITORIALITY AND ETHNICITY

Empire and Territory: Perceptions and Realities

John Haldon (Princeton University)

One for All, All for One? Provincial Elites and the Empire

Vivien Prigent (CNRS)

TERRITORIALITY AND ETHNICITY (*continued*)

Was Byzantium a “Multiethnic” Empire?

Anthony Kaldellis (Ohio State University)

Commentary

Michael McCormick (Harvard University)

SATURDAY, 22 APRIL

EARLY MEDIEVAL EMPIRES IN THE ROMAN WORLD

Rethinking Empire:

The Carolingian Perspective

Jennifer Davis (Catholic University of America)

The Imperial Project of Symeon I of Bulgaria (893–927):

Byzantine Frameworks and Aftermath

Angel Nikolov (University of Sofia)

BYZANTIUM’S CULTURE OF EMPIRE

Recording, Writing, and Enacting Empire:

Officeholders as Agents of Empire in the Middle and Later Byzantine Periods

Niels Gaul (University of Edinburgh)

Imperial Peripheries and Holy Sepulchres

Annabel Wharton (Duke University)

COMPARATIVE CONTEXTS

The Long and Winding Road to Empire:

The Sublime State from the Late Fourteenth to the Mid-Sixteenth Century

Cemal Kafadar (Harvard University)

CONCLUSION

Rethinking Theocracy

Paul Magdalino

Commentary

Maya Jasanoff (Harvard University)